

Application number 10/804,712
Amendment dated September 6, 2005
Reply to office action mailed June 8, 2005

PATENT

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

After entry of this amendment, claims 1-26 will be pending in this application. Claims 1, 2, 9, 11, and 17 have been amended. New claims 22-26 have been added. Support for the new and amended claims can be found in the specification. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1-6, 17-19 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Fujii et al., United States patent application publication number 2002/0017940 (Fujii). Claims 1-8, 17-19 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kan, United States patent application publication number 2002/0057105 (Kan) in view of Toyashima, United States patent application publication number 2001/0017755. Claims 9-19 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kan in view of Hirakata, Japan publication 06-178445. Reconsideration of these rejections and allowance of the pending claims in light of these amendments and remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim 1

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Fujii. Claim 1 also stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kan, in view of Toyashima. But these references do not show or suggest each and every element of this claim. For example, claim 1, as amended, recites "a resistor having a first terminal coupled to the pad, and a second terminal coupled to receive an input signal." These cited references do not provide this feature.

The pending office action cites resistor 7 in Figure 5 of Fujii and resistor 20 in Figure 1 of Kan as providing this feature. (See pending office action, page 2, paragraph 2 and page 3, paragraph 4.) But for each of these resistors the same terminal is coupled both to a pad and to receive an input signal. That is, the second terminal is not coupled to receive an input signal as required.

Specifically, resistor 7 in Figure 5 of Fujii shows one terminal, the rightmost terminal as drawn, coupled to a pad 1, which also receives an input signal. Similarly, resistor 20 in Figure 1 of Kan shows one terminal, again the rightmost, coupled to pad 17 which receives a signal from buffer 56. Accordingly, the cited references do not show or suggest a resistor having

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a first terminal coupled to the pad, and a second terminal coupled to receive an input signal as required by the claim.

For at least this reason, claim 1 should be allowed.

Claim 17

Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Fujii. Claim 1 also stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kan, in view of Toyashima. But these references do not show or suggest each and every element of this claim. For example, claim 1 recites "wherein the clamp circuit comprises a clamp diode in series with a switch, the switch configured to open and close under control of a first signal." The cited references do not provide this feature.

Figure 2 of Toyashima shows a fuse F1 in series with a diode D1. But a fuse is not configured to open and close under control of a first signal. Rather, the fuse F1 in Toyashima makes a connection between two nodes, a pad 10 and the anode of diode D1. If it is desired that the diode D1 be disconnected from the pad 10, a large current is passed through the fuse. (See Toyashima, paragraph 38) Once a fuse is opened (cut), it cannot be closed. Thus, Toyashima does not provide a switch configured to open and close under control of a first signal as required by the claim.

For at least this reason, claim 17 should be allowed. The new claims 22-26 should be allowed for at least similar reasons.

Other claims

Claim 9 should be allowed for similar reasons as claim 1. The other claims depend on one of the above claims, and should be allowed for at least the same reasons, and for the additional limitations they recite.

CONCLUSION

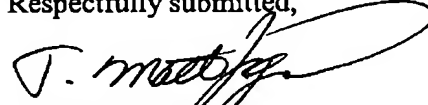
In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal notice of allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

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If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 415-576-0200.

Respectfully submitted,



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